

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ENERGY STRATEGY

February 27, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. One of the commitments made in the mandate of the 18th Assembly was to create a Northwest Territories Energy Strategy because the previous one expired in 2015. A draft NWT Energy Strategy was finally released to the public on September 25, 2017. It would be fair to say that very few of the standing committee's comments were incorporated into the draft.

The strategy proposes a confusing array of energy targets as follows:

- A 25 per cent reduction of GHG emissions from electricity generation;
- A 10 per cent reduction of GHG emissions from road vehicles;
- A 40 per cent increase in renewable energy use for space heating; and
- A 15 per cent increase in residential commercial government building energy efficiency.

No energy targets were specified for the largest energy user industry. There are no visible links to the Climate Change Strategic Framework, or to any potential carbon tax revenues. No roles are contemplated for the NWT Power Corporation. In the future, the Arctic Energy Alliance receives almost no attention. No specific actions are identified in any detail and no funds are identified for implementation.

The draft energy strategy is overwhelmingly focused on electricity generation, which represents about 10 per cent of the energy used in the NWT and our greenhouse gas emissions. It's difficult to understand the complete failure to address energy use in the industrial sector, which is over half of all Northwest Territories energy use and over 40 per cent of our greenhouse gas emissions.

What's missing is an overall direction to move us toward reducing fossil fuel consumption, not vague statements. I had expected to see something like a bold vision of the Northwest Territories where communities and householders are energy self-sufficient. The Northwest Territories Power Corporation, doing itself out of a job, bolstered Arctic Energy Alliance with resources to build community energy plans leading to self-reliance and programs for householders to conserve energy and switch to renewables. Clear energy targets are needed for each sector that should be related to reduced energy demand, fuel switching, improved efficiencies, and improved technologies. These targets should be linked to GHG reductions in the Climate Change Strategic Framework. Carbon tax revenues and potential federal funding also need to be incorporated into the strategy.

Later today, Mr. Speaker, I'll have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure, who also has responsibility for the Energy Strategy. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

